Senior Corps Update August 1999 Edition





An update of activities and information published monthly by the National Senior Service Corps for the Senior Corps network and interested National Service colleagues

The National Senior Service Corps is part of the Corporation for National Service's network of programs which also includes AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America

National Senior Service Corps Tom Endres, Director

Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations hearing rescheduled for September --

The House Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education, which supports AmeriCorps*VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps, was scheduled to act on its funding bill on Wednesday, July 21st. However, due to the constraints associated with tight spending caps included in the balanced budget agreement, action was postponed until Thursday, September 9th. The Senate committee has not announced when it will act on the Senate version of the bill.

The House Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies approved \$400 million for AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America, approximately 8% below last year's final appropriation of \$435 million. The full Appropriations Committee took up this measure on Friday, July 30th. The Committee approved by voice vote an amendment to remove the Corporation's funding from the bill in order to restore some of the reduction in the NASA appropriation. The Subcommittee Chairman, James Walsh (R-NY), who is a long-time supporter of national service, stated that he will work to ensure that the Corporation receives its funding in the final bill negotiated between the House and Senate. It is important to remember that the Committee's action is only the beginning of a long appropriations process. We found ourselves in a similar position last year. In the past we have ended with an overall increase in our appropriation.

From the National Senior Service Corps Director: Senior Corps' Strategy for Future

The National Senior Service Corps of the future. What do I envision? I see a strong and vital network of older adults, personally benefiting from the experience of service, while meeting critical needs in their communities. Diverse volunteers, compassionate and committed, including younger seniors, men, and concerned seniors from every background. Increased resources and investments from stakeholders at all levels. How will we reach this future? One way is to rely on guiding principles that lie at the heart of our mission.

There are a number of principles guiding Senior Corps' strategy for the future. Examples include: assuring a high quality experience for the volunteers; using the principles of Programming for Impact as a framework for addressing priority community needs; maximizing resources though collaborations and partnerships. These are ways of showing what senior volunteers and Senior Corps programs can do.

In addition to these programming principles, we are committed to the strategic approach of building the future of senior service on the foundation of the three existing programs. Anyone who has witnessed Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP volunteers in action instantaneously becomes a believer in the power of senior service. The programs work, each in its own way. This network of Senior Corps programs now represents the largest force in senior service, one that has experience and trained leadership.

At the same time, as we look ahead, we must realistically assess the existing programs with respect to the flexibility, resources, approaches, and tools needed to continue to lead senior service into the future. The time for honest assessment and action is now, based on our ability over the years to meet changing needs head on such as launching RSVP and SCP from their demonstration roots.

The Senior Corps will continue to steer into the future with confidence. We cannot, however rest on our laurels. That simply won't work. If the three programs are the infrastructure for the future, then each must be responsive to the needs of future participants, and the changing needs of communities served. Furthermore, programs must meet new standards of increased accountability that reflect the American public's interest in smaller, more effective government.

And lastly, we must capture the imagination of policy makers and funders if we are to realize sizable new financial investments in the programs. I look forward to working together to assure that policy makers and funders understand the significant contributions that these programs are making and the tremendous difference they could make if they had at least double the amount of financial resources. Our vision of the future includes a Senior Corps presence in every county of the country, getting things done; helping children get a better start in life, providing in home care for the frail elderly and respite care for caregivers, engaging larger numbers of diverse volunteers in senior service and making service the expectation and experience of everyone as they enter retirement.

It is time to rally around our common goals and move senior service from the margins to the mainstream of national service.

News Flash!

Beginning with the **August** Edition, the Senior Corps Update will be available in .pdf format on the Corporation for National Service web site: www.nationalservice.org

Senior Corps Policy Corner

Senior Corps Headquarters is asked periodically, to interpret or clarify certain provisions of program policy and regulations. We use the *Policy Corner* to answer questions or provide clarification. them with you in a Question and Answer format. If Corporation State Offices have questions on the responses given, please contact **John Keller at (202) 606-5000, ext. 285**. Senior Corps Projects Projects with questions regarding any policy or regulatory requirement should always contact their Corporation State Office for assistance.

August Policy Corner

This month, the Policy Corner addresses three issues that were the subject of recent comments on the Senior Corps list serv, NSSC TALK: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); counting Advisory Council time for RSVP volunteers; and in-kind dollar value for Advisory Council members.

A. Clarifying the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):

Program Regulations that went into effect for all Senior Corps programs on April 23, 1999 provide guidance with respect to MOUs. They provide that the placement of volunteers will be governed by a **Memorandum of Understanding:**

- That is negotiated prior to placement;
- That specifies the mutual responsibilities of the station and sponsor;
- That is renegotiated at least every three years; and
- That states the station assures it will not discriminate against [volunteers] or in the operation of its program on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, religion, or on the basis of disability, if the participant or member is a qualified individual with a disability.

Please note that bullet three above says at least every three years. If the Corporation State Office or the sponsor believe the performance of the volunteer station, the nature of community needs, or the desire to negotiate cost sharing suggests more frequent updates, MOUs may be scheduled at intervals of less than every three years.

B. Counting Advisory Council Time for RSVP Volunteers

Serving on an RSVP Advisory Council may be counted as volunteer hours when:

- The person performing the duties is an RSVP volunteer;
- The RSVP volunteers' assignment is to perform specific duties for the Advisory Council or similar organizational structure;

Serving on an Advisory Council **cannot be counted** as volunteer hours when:

• The person performing the duties is not an RSVP volunteer;

C. In-Kind Dollar Value for Advisory Council Members

There is no in-kind dollar value for community volunteers serving on the Advisory Council. However, if a Council member provides professional or technical services that are integral to the project operation and are budgeted in the grant, these services may be included as in-kind services with appropriate dollar value and documentation.

1999 Project Profile of Volunteer Activity (PPVA) early response--- Senior Corps headquarters has received approxmately 70 percent of the confirmation postcards from Senior Corps projects, indiciating that PPVA data collection packets are at their destination. Additionally, more than 300 completed PPVA forms have been received. Throughout August and September, the database will be updated to reflect the newest numbers and information. The target date for distribution is September 30, 1999.

As Project Directors know from their packets, the PPVA data collection instrument was redesigned for FY 1999. The proposed changes to the final questionnaire appeared in the Federal Register on January 21, 1999 (Volume 64, Number 13). Project Directors and other interested members of the public were invited to comment on the new instrument. The Senior Corps mailed copies of the Federal Register announcement of proposed changes to all Senior Corps projects on February 1, 1999. Fifteen comments were received from Project Directors, of which 13 were favorable

On NSSC TALK Project Directors highlighted three issues for clarification related to the revised PPVA instrument:

- 1. Volunteer Demographics Format During the final clearance of the PPVA form, OMB required the Senior Corps to adopt the Census 2000 demographic categories, which resulted in having to look closely when completing the volunteer demographics section. These categories are now the federal standard, and will appear in the Census 2000 surveys.
- 2. Volunteer Stations Roster Minor modifications were included in the new PPVA form to better reflect the types of stations in the Senior Corps network, and to reduce the number of stations reported in the past as "Other". Analysis of data on file revealed that high percentages of "Other" were actually museums or public health agencies. Additionally, schools as stations were separated into two categories: Elementary and Secondary. Nutrition sites for SCP was deleted, as it was rarely selected by projects as an active station type. All other station information remained the same as the previous year.
- **3.** Basic Human Needs Codes and Activities A limited number of changes were introduced in an effort to more accurately classify the activities of Senior Corps volunteers, as follows:
 - Category 213: New category for Senior Center group programs not providing adult day care services
 - Category 305 and 334: Moved dropout education programs from 305 to 324: GED programs
 - Category 336: Deleted, with its two dimensions split between category 312 (child literacy) and 336 (adult literacy)

As a reminder, PPVA is:

- A national data collection instrument sent by Senior Corps Headquarters to local Foster Grandparent, RSVP and Senior Companion projects;
- A compilation of data taken from individual project surveys which Senior Corps
 uses to develop state and national reports and snapshots of project activities,
 clients served, sponsor and volunteer station profiles, volunteer demographics
 and trends, and other aspects of project operations; and
- A key data source used for Congressional appropriations hearings and to respond to other information requests.

The Colonel "Does Chicken" and Seniors For Schools "Right" -- KFC, the world's largest chicken restaurant chain legendary for its famous "we do chicken right" message, is donating \$10,000 to the national Seniors for Schools (SFS) project. The chicken chain is acknowledging the project with its 1999 Colonel's Way Award honoring persons and projects that exemplify the tireless spirit and heritage of KFC's founder, Colonel Harland Sanders who, at the age of 62 signed his first Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise with nothing but his chicken recipe and a \$105 Social Security check.

The Award is in its fourth year and over the past three years has been judged by actor Tony Randall. Three national winners are chosen from a list of state winners in the categories of high-adventure, communications/education/science, and community service. The national winners each receive \$5,000 plus a two-day, all expenses paid, trip to New York City. Their nominators also receive \$1,000 each. State winners receive \$50 KFC gift certificate, a years supply of Centrum Silver vitamins, a year's subscription to Prevention magazine and a Colonel's Way Award certificate.

Seniors for Schools, a demonstration project funded by the National Senior Service Corps of the Corporation for National Service, pairs senior adults with children in grades K-3 as reading tutors and mentors. The project was nominated for the award as a result of the company's own research on community service projects. The \$10,000 cash award will be divided equally among the nine project sites. The awards ceremony will be held on September 24, as part of the World's Chicken Festival being held in London, Kentucky.

We salute KFC, the Colonel, the Seniors for Schools projects, and our volunteers for their efforts in helping children learn to read.

You, too, can nominate an active senior for the Colonel award. Just send a 250-word essay explaining why your senior is outstanding -- whether it is participating in some wild adventure or donating his or her time to help improve the lives of those around them. Essays can be submitted on-line at KFC's webs site, www.kfc.com or mailed to: The Colonel's Way Award, 200 E. Randolph, 63rd Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60601. Entries must be submitted by August 20, 1999.

Technology Spotlight

New Web Statistics from Cheryl Spitale, Corporation Web Master -

New figures from the web master clearly show that the Corporation's web site is attracting more and more attention. For example:

- The total hits on the web site (the number of times the site was accessed) increased by **71 percent** over this time last year.
- Senior Corps hits increased by **20 percent** over last year.

• In December of 1998, the Senior Corps page logged **16,909 hits**. That number increased in May to **18,816 hits**, and the June 1999 report tallied **20,281 hits**.

NSSC TALK News...

New NSSC TALK Administrator on the horizon -- Earlier this month, Senior Corps posted the following message on its list serv, NSSC TALK, announcing the upcoming transition of administration from the Senior Corps headquarters office to ETR Associates.

Dear NSSC TALK subscribers:

The Senior Corps is pleased to announce that the administration of its list serv, NSSC TALK, will soon be handled by ETR Associates.

Throughout and following this transition, the purpose and availability of the list serv will not change. It will keep its current name. It will remain a reliable vehicle to share ideas, communicate, and strengthen the senior service network.

The Senior Corps is pleased to have ETR's expertise available for administration of this list serv. As many of you know, ETR is a technical assistance provider to the Corporation for National Service's programs. ETR manages the National Service Resource Center, and is widely recognized for its expertise, high quality materials, and customer service.

The impact on current subscribers should be minimal. As more information becomes available, it will be posted to keep everyone updated.

Thank you to the more than 450 colleagues who subscribe to NSSC TALK. Please continue to tell other Project Directors and colleagues to join us!

Senior Corps is now compiling updated subscriber lists, that will be transferred to ETR as the actual changeover takes place.

Special Request of Any NSSC TALK Subscribers Using the "Digest" Format -- Zac Mutrux of ETR will serve as primary list serv owner and administrator, and he has a request of NSSC TALK subscribers who receive their messages in Digest form (one message daily rather than individual messages). The list serv query software does not contain an automatic feature to identify subscribers who use the Digest format. If you receive your messages in Digest format, and wish to continue, please send an e-mail to Angela Roberts, Senior Corps at aroberts@cns.gov and she will forward information to Zac.

By Popular Demand -- NSSC TALK List Serv Command Tutorial:

How To Subscribe: Send an e-mail message addressed to **LISTSERV@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU**

In the body of the message type: ADD NSSCTALK your email address your first name your last

name

How To Set Messages to Digest Form: Send an e-mail message addressed to

LISTSERV@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU

In the body of the message type: SET NSSCTALK DIGEST

How to Access the NSSC TALK Archives: Go to the following URL: http://MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU/archives/nssctalk/html

How to post a message on NSSC TALK: Send an e-mail addressed to:

NSSCTALK@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU

Type in the body of the message and hit "Send"

Remember that NSSC TALK is a "text-based" list serv. It cannot process attached documents or files. If you have a file that you wish to share, open it on your local computer, copy the text, and paste it into the body of the message.

How to direct messages to the correct destination:

When you hit the "Reply" button in your e-mail software, any reply is automatically directed back to the original e-mail address. For the list serv, this is back to NSSC TALK and its subscribers. In most messages, you want to reply this way. In others, you may want to reply to the actual individual instead of the entire list. In this case, do not hit "Reply". Instead, address an e-mail message to the individual subscriber you are trying to reach.

How to Reply to the list serv with long messages:

Some messages posted on NSSC TALK contain large amounts of original text, that is not necessary to include in a reply. Examples are the Senior Corps Update and National Service News. If you automatically press "Reply", your new message will contain your words **and** the original long message. In these cases, be sure to scrub out the original long text that is not needed – it will help everyone read their messages faster and more efficiently.

About Your Computer! Attention Project Directors! One More Time for Any Who Did Not Respond In July

Thank you to the more than 100 Senior Corps Project Directors who responded to the "My Computer" question list last month. We can do better than that, so please let us hear from you! We will use this information to gauge several aspects of a Senior Corps technology plan.

About your office computer -- Senior Corps is looking to the future, and efficient ways to use technology as a tool. The best information to determine "how far" and "how fast" resides with each project director. Please **take less than a minute** to answer the questions below and e-mail your response to Angela Roberts

at aroberts@cns.gov

Individual responses will be combined into a national snapshot of the Senior Corps and its technology readiness to plan for new types of information systems, including more web based tools and, eventually, web based reporting.

- 1. Type of computer: IBM PC (including IBM compatibles) or Macintosh?
- 2. Type of microprocessor: 486 Pentium Pentium II Other (specify)
- 3. Operating system: Windows '95 Windows '98 Other: (specify)
- 4. How you use your computer (all that apply): (1) word processing; (2) spreadsheets, (3) databases, (4) e-mail, (5) world wide web
- 5. Your top wish list items for making your computer a tool to accomplish your work?

Kudos to Senior Corps Colleagues and Volunteers Recognized for Excellence!

Colorado – **Judith Frankenberger** of **Pueblo RSVP** was honored as the outstanding RSVP volunteer during the 20th annual volunteer recognition banquet given by the volunteer coordinators of Pueblo.

Kentucky – **Central Kentucky CAA RSVP America Reads Tutors** of Elizabethtown were received a J.C. Penney Golden Rule award, which included \$250.00. The funds will be used to recruit additional volunteers and support the community reading program.

Mississippi – RSVP of Natchez received \$5,000 from Blue Cross and Blue Shield. The award honored National Ageless Hero Harriet Smith, one of six people selected from 6,000 nominations. Former President and First Lady George and Barbara Bush recognized Mrs. Smith also, during a national ceremony in Chicago in May. According to BC&BC of Mississippi Vice President, Chris Clarke, "We are making this donation so that others can learn to read, and to show appreciation for the work of literacy volunteers. The volunteers and staff of the Natchez RSVP were an essential part of helping Harriet Smith reach a lifelong dream, and they should feel proud."

Oklahoma – RSVP volunteer **Margaret Frey** was recently named Oklahoma's Outstanding Older Woman of the Year by the Area-wide Agency on Aging.

Tennessee – **Chattanooga FGP** Project Director **Sherry Black** reports that six of her project's volunteers won \$1,000 for their literacy tutoring, and went to the America Reads Nationals for their contributions as tutors. **Clara Forester** won \$1,000 as a top volunteer at YMCA, and **Evelyn Jackson** won

Kudos to Senior Corps Colleagues and Volunteers Recognized for Excellence!

\$250 for her volunteer work at Orange Grove Center.

Funding Successes for Senior's Projects

State Funding Successes ---

California -

- Using State of California funds, the California State University FGP/SCP of Chico has expanded for
 the first time into previously unserved counties of Colusa and Butte in the northern part of the state. In
 Colusa County, 11 Foster Grandparents will serve; and in Butte County, 18 Senior Companions will
 improve the quality of life for homebound older adults.
- Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services RSVP in San Francisco is using State of
 California funds to expand services across the Golden Gate to Marin County, with the development of
 new FGP and SCP projects. This is the first time that any Senior Corps project has served in Marin
 County.

Connecticut – The Connecticut Department of Social Services/Elderly Services Division will increase its funding of the state's 13 RSVP projects by 2 percent. The current funding is \$73,989, which will increase to \$75,469.

Louisiana – The State Legislature awarded \$433,000 in state matching funds to the National Sernior Service Corps projects for the current fiscal year.

Massachusetts – The Massachusetts Service Alliance State Commission was awarded \$800,000 in state appropriated funds for the MASS Mentoring Initiative. A total of 43 grants were awarded across the Commonwealth. These funds raise the level of state appropriated funds to support AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America program to \$5 million in FY 2000.

Other Funding Successes --

California -- **Palm Desert RSVP** of the Chachella Valley launched a new program to reduce the number of seniors hospitalized each year because of medication misuse. It received a \$35,000 grant from the Riverside County Office on Aging to develop the six-month pilot program.

Montana – **Bozeman RSVP Advisory Council** conducted a fundraiser auction that raised more than \$4,400.

Nevada – The **Elvirita Lewis Forum FGP** received a total of \$65,000 from seven different sources to support project operations.

Tennessee – **Nashville RSVP** received \$2,000 from the F. Stratton Foster Foundation, and a \$10,000 grant from the Phillips Foundation for expanded projects and activities.

Washington – The **Lutheran Social Services SCP** of Tacoma received grants of \$8,000 from United Way of Kitsap County and \$5,000 from Pierce County's HUD/Community Development Grant for project operations.

Total Funding Successes Dollars Reported: \$ 5,636,389 Total State Appropriation Successes Reported: \$ 5,506,989

National Senior Service Corps --- Getting Things Done

America Reads...

Maryland -

- During the 1998-99 school year, 20 **Anne Arundel County RSVP** volunteers met weekly with kindergarten and first grade students in Annapolis to participate in a pilot learning enrichment program called "First Focus." In July, 15 RSVP volunteers and County Board of Education staff met to evaluate the program. Volunteers reported that students improved their language, social and organizational skills.
- In a cross-stream literacy effort, 11 **Baltimore County RSVP** volunteers and **Magic Carpet**, an AmeriCorps program, provided an exciting reading readiness program for four and five-year-olds in three elementary schools this year. The volunteers observed improvement in the children's attention spans, reading readiness skills, and self-esteem.

Pennsylvania – **RSVP of Delaware County** is getting help from the business community to get things done in child literacy. The project received a \$1,000 "Take-Care-Of-It" community grant from Western Pest Services to fund America Reads activities. In addition, Borders Books and Music in Springfield donated certifications for each of the America Reads volunteers. The project has over 100 volunteer tutors, serving in 35 elementary schools.

Rhode Island – The **Providence Foster Grandparent Program** is operating a Summer FGP Institute in partnership with the Community College of Rhode Island to provide in-depth training to Foster Grandparents, designed to enhance their effectiveness with children and in school environments.

Utah – One **Provo RSVP** volunteer took the initiative to help three of the children she tutors to succeed. The children's primary language is Spanish, and textbook used by the school was in English. Success in reading was slow. Then, according to RSVP volunteer tutor **Doris Smith**, "I called to McGraw Hill publishers and learned that the same textbooks are published in Spanish. I told our principal and he ordered some books for our Spanish-speaking students. One boy, in particular, kept the English book to extend his comprehension. At the end of the year, he placed in the 90th percentile on state reading exams."

More Success Stories...

Delaware -- Twelve **Kent County** RSVP volunteers provided help and assistance to 135 persons who are experiencing the pain of losing a spouse. They serve through the Widowed Persons Services outreach organization, in which trained widowed volunteers give support to those newly wodowed.

New York – Community Service Society's RSVP reported successes in the Prejudice Reduction Project, which began in Staten Island in 1990 with 15 volunteers, six schools and 300 students. Since that time, it has touched the lives of more than 2,000 children. The award winning intergenerational program brings trained senior volunteers into New York City public school classrooms in an effort to reduce student prejudice toward older persons, and to build an understanding and respect for human differences. Helping youngsters to resolve biases not only means a more gratifying life for the students, but is an investment in a healthier future for a diverse society.

Pennsylvania – In June, the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection James M. Seif announced that on behalf of the Governor, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps was nominated to the United Nations Environment Programme Global 500 Roll of Honor. RSVP and AmeriCorps*VISTA members are serving as members of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps. Additionally, the Pennsylvania state budget for the Governor's "Growing Greener Initiative" earmarked \$300,000 for the local EASI chapters around the state.

Resources

Learn More About Senior Corps Project Activities -- Corporation staff, Senior Corps project directors and other interested parties can receive upon request copies of issue lists -- information about what Senior Corps projects are doing in a particular service area, organized alphabetically by state. These lists are considered ongoing works-in-progress and are not necessarily comprehensive. They include information about projects gleaned from state office's weekly reports and from projects themselves. Issue lists that are currently avai' '''

1. America Reads7. Public Safety13. Respite for Caregivers2. Community Development8. Mentoring14. Housing/Homelessness3. Environment9. Technology15. IndependentLiving

4. Non-federal Funding
5. Collaboration
10. Child Care
11. Unified State Plans
12. Intergenerational Projects
12. Intergenerational Projects

To receive copies of any list, please contact **Gloria Godwin**, (202) 606-5000 extension 189 or e-mail ggodwin@cns.gov

Join Senior Corps Colleagues on NSSCTalk -- The 400-plus Senior Corps project directors who subscribe to the Senior Corps' Listserv, NSSCTalk, are finding it an effective means to share tools, tips, ideas and information quickly and efficiently. Please join in and let Senior Corps handle the details for you -- just send an e-mail to Angela Roberts at aroberts@cns.gov requesting a subscription (including your e-mail address and name) and she will sign you up.

New Publication: Mentoring School-Age Children – Public/Private Ventures recently published this report, which looks at mentoring programs designed for school-age children (ages 5 through 18). This report, based on a sample of 722 mentoring programs, includes explorations of program characteristics, recruiting and training mentors, making matches, and conclusions and future research. Some of the findings include:

- ★ The number of programs has increased substantially in recent years; most programs are quite small;
- ★ Mentoring programs have a variety of goals and expect youth and mentors to engage in a variety of activities;
- ★ Programs are experimenting with new configurations, moving beyond the traditional community-based approach, including matching mentors with multiple youth or groups of mentors with groups of youth and combining mentoring with other program components; and
- ★ Newer programs tend to be shorter-term, compared to the traditional Big Brothers/Big Sisters model.

Copies can be ordered for \$8.50 each from Public/Private Ventures, One Commerce Square, 2005 Market Street, Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Telephone: 215-557-4000. Web address: www.ppv.org

Foundation Center Online – The Foundation Center web site at www.foundationcenter.org is a tremendous and accessible resource for anyone looking for funding opportunities or conducting foundation research. The site contains several searchable databases, including grant maker information (search geographically, by name, by subject), an online library of publications and books, and an indexed series of Philanthropy News Digest, which can be searched by key word or subject.

Senior Corps Update is dispatched by fax (and e-mail upon request) on the first Friday of each month. Please continue to share with Senior Corps Project Directors and other colleagues. **Editor**: Angela Roberts, National Senior Service Corps.,**202-606-5000 ext. 111** or e-mail to aroberts@cns.gov. *Comments, ideas and suggestions welcome!*